

MICHIGAN STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT 2011-2012 Steven E. Newman, MD

February 8, 2012

The Honorable Rick Snyder, Governor
State of Michigan
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909


Dear Governor Snyder:

Thank you for the opportunity today to offer our comments and support for your push for insurance coverage of autism. MSMS has always supported mental health parity and pushing for the coverage of autism is one crucial step in providing the coverage Michigan citizens deserve.

The debates to offer coverage for those with autism have been continuing year after year. MSMS has always been at the forefront of those voicing the opinion that autism is a great first step, but we as a state need to do more. We are very supportive of your willingness to put this issue in the spotlight. Many innovations have been made in the study of and treatment for this disorder that so many of Michigan's citizens deal with every day. There are now evidence-based treatments that provide productive individualistic care for those with autism.

The costs associated with treating autism have historically been a hurdle for providing coverage for the disorder, but by making evidence-based medicine a crucial part of this legislation, you ensure that the costs of treatment will be lowered and the overall costs will be contained. It is time for Michigan to stand with the other 29 states that have chosen to support this issue. We thank you for bringing to light the struggles endured by all who have autism and the families who support them. Insurance coverage for autism is a realistic and reachable goal, one that all Michigan families deserve.

Sincerely,


Steven E. Newman, MD
President

c: Colin J. Ford, Director, Federal and State Government Relations, MSMS
Julie L. Novak, Executive Director, MSMS